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Also, since the present Information Disclosure Statement is being filed before the mailing date of any of a final action under § 1.113, a notice of allowance under § 1.311, or an action that otherwise closes prosecution in the application, and each item of information contained in the information disclosure statement was first cited in any communication from a foreign patent office in a counterpart foreign application not more than three months prior to the filing of the information disclosure statement, no fee under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17(p) is required.

These documents were cited in a Search/Examination Report with respect to an International Application related to the Applicant's above-identified U.S. Patent Application. For the Examiner's convenience, a copy of the Search/Examination Report is attached.

The Examiner is requested to consider the listed documents in connection with the above-identified application and to return a copy of Form PTO/SB/08a to the Applicant with the Examiner's initials in the spaces provided.

Submission of this Information Disclosure Statement does not constitute an admission by the Applicant as to the materiality of the listed documents to the application, nor does the Applicant waive any right to challenge the validity of the documents as prior art should such action be deemed appropriate.

Respectfully submitted,



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Dated: December 7, 2007